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Grad earns prestigious accounting award for stellar exam performance

University of Dayton

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Grad earns prestigious accounting award for stellar exam performance

University of Dayton alumna Lauren Barhorst earned a prestigious national award for her exceptional performance on the CPA examination — placing her in the top 0.1% of people who sat for the test last year.

Passing the exam alone is an impressive achievement, says Mike Decker, vice president of examinations for the American Institute of CPAs. But to earn the Elijah Watt Sells Award, candidates must obtain a cumulative average score above 95.50 across all four sections on their first attempt. Only 89 people did that in 2020.

“This is a phenomenal achievement by a phenomenal student and person,” said Tim Keune, chair of UD’s department of accounting. “When people take this very difficult exam, just passing it is a noteworthy accomplishment. However, scoring in the top 0.1% out of 75,000 people, which is what Lauren did, is beyond exceptional. Lauren is intellectually gifted, but what makes her even more special is that she takes nothing for granted and gives her all-out best effort. The Elijah Watt Sells Award is well-deserved recognition because it reflects how she conducts herself. Lauren has a great career ahead of her.”

Barhorst earned a bachelor’s in accounting in 2019 and master of professional accountancy in 2020, and is employed with Deloitte.

She said that while passing the four-part exam was not easy, a good study plan and time dedicated to it made it manageable.

“I certainly have the UD faculty to thank for helping me get to this point as well,” she said. “A great deal of the information on the exams was covered in my business classes. The master of professional accountancy program was especially beneficial as a lot of the subject matter was

tailored to prepare us for the CPA exams. In addition to helping with specific subject matter, my time at UD also helped me develop the study skills and critical thinking skills necessary to pass the exams.”

Barhorst is the third accounting major from UD to earn this distinction. Michael Westendorf (in 2015) and Jessica Banitt (in 2014) also earned the award.

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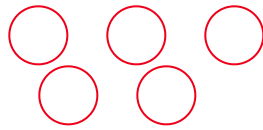
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